

Guidebook for Juvenile Justice & Child Welfare System

Coordination and Integration: A framework for Improved Outcomes

Center for Juvenile Justice Reform: <http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/>

The Child Welfare League of America's Juvenile Justice Division created a guidebook incorporating practical strategies combining the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. The guidebook is comprised of five phases that include mobilization and advocacy, data collection and information sharing, inventory and assessment, action strategy, and implementation. Eleven indexes follow the phases. They are Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Amendments; Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments; "Keeping Our Children Safe: The Child Protection System"; the Juvenile Justice System; King County, Washington, Charter Agreement; Oregon's Executive Order 02-04; Baltimore City Memorandum of Understanding; Hopetown Hypothetical Agreement; Discussion Questions for Barriers to Integration and Coordination; Descriptions of Federal Programs for Children and Families; and Summaries of Federal Programs for Juvenile Justice.

The child welfare system and the juvenile justice system are increasingly overlapping one another. For example, many children who are maltreated later become juvenile delinquents. Several studies have shown that children who are maltreated have increased likelihood for future delinquency. One of the best-known studies was done in the Midwest between 1967 and 1971. The two systems struggle to keep children safe and in secure homes, while the other holds children accountable for their delinquent acts. This guidebook hopes to help state and local jurisdictions achieve a healthy and productive integration of both the child welfare and juvenile justice system.

Although not every community will have the adequate financial resources to achieve every goal to combine child welfare and the juvenile justice system, targeting specific programs and services can serve as a foundation. Research that looks at comprehensive system coordination and integrations, using evidence based strategies and practices and reliance on multisystem data and information management systems is available for those jurisdictions that seek to succeed in the integration. It will take many small steps to achieve long term and cost effective policies and procedures. If communities can come together and share resources and communicate with those who reside in different jurisdictions, it is hopeful for the future that both systems can come together and help to improve outcomes of youth in the United States.